

State of South Dakota

SEVENTY-SECOND SESSION
LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY, 1997

781A0672

HOUSE LOCAL GOVERNMENT COMMITTEE

ENGROSSED NO. **HCR1008** - 2/7/97

Introduced by: Representatives Peterson (Bill), Chicoine, Fischer-Clemens, Madden, Napoli, and Smidt and Senators Everist, Ham, Lange, and Staggers

1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION, Requesting the appointment of an interim legislative
2 committee to study the desirability and the feasibility of county government consolidation.

3 WHEREAS, during the territorial and early statehood periods of South Dakota's history, the
4 Legislature frequently created, merged, and adjusted the boundaries of counties to facilitate the
5 opening of new lands to settlement and to keep pace with the changing needs of local areas for
6 the services of county government; and

7 WHEREAS, in the past seventy-five years, with the exception of the mergers of three small
8 reservation counties, Washington, Armstrong, and Washabaugh, the Legislature has ceased to
9 perform this useful function and has ceded this legislative prerogative which constitutes the only
10 purposeful means of conducting any meaningful evaluation of county boundaries on a statewide
11 basis; and

12 WHEREAS, with the adoption of Article IX, section 1 of the Constitution, which requires
13 a majority vote of the electors of each affected county for any county boundary change, the
14 Legislature's ability to propound necessary statewide revisions has been substantially diminished;
15 and

1 WHEREAS, social, cultural, economic, and demographic changes have so altered the face
2 of South Dakota's governmental landscape since the last comprehensive reorganization of South
3 Dakota's counties almost a century ago as to render the logic of that arrangement substantially
4 obsolete; and

5 WHEREAS, general advances in technology, transportation, communication, and commerce
6 have also revolutionized the relationship between citizens and their need for efficient and
7 accessible county government:

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-
9 second Legislature of the State of South Dakota, the Senate concurring therein, that the
10 Executive Board of the Legislative Research Council appoint an interim legislative committee
11 to make a comprehensive study of the desirability and feasibility of reducing the number of
12 counties in South Dakota, to propose one or more county reapportionment plans, and to
13 recommend any necessary constitutional amendments or other legislation to the seventy-third
14 legislative assembly.

1 **BILL HISTORY**

2 2/6/97 Scheduled for Committee hearing on this date.

3 2/6/97 Local Government Do Pass Amended, AYES 10, NAYS 3. H.J. 337